

OKLAHOMA
TERRITORY

TERRITORIAL TALES

Bits of
History
Before
Statehood

INDIAN
TERRITORY

NOV 13 1982

State Seal Incorporates Territory, 5 Tribes' Seals

Each of the Five Civilized Tribes had a "Great Seal," which was affixed to official documents in the same manner as those of federal and state governments. When the Territory of Oklahoma was organized, the First Legislature arranged for a "Great Seal." It was used until state government was established.

When the Sequoyah Constitutional Convention was in session in Muskogee in 1905, the Rev. A. Grant Evans, then president of Henry Kendall College, designed a seal for the proposed State of Sequoyah.

It consisted of a five-pointed star, with the seals of the Five Tribes reproduced in its angles. Above the star was a half-length figure of Sequoyah holding a tablet bearing the words, "We are brothers" in Cherokee. In other spaces were 45 stars, emblematic of the constellation to which the 46th star was to be added.

During the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, members of the committee assigned to design a new "Great Seal" consulted with Evans. The outcome was the combination of the Sequoyah seal and the Oklahoma Territory seal.

The position of the star was changed so that one point was upright. Seals of the Five Civilized Tribes surround the seal of Oklahoma Territory in the center. In the surrounding circle were incorporated the words "Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma 1907." The 45 stars were included in groups of nine.